(b) if so, the reasons for delay in according clearance; and

(c) by when approval/clearance is likely to be accorded?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT . AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Poaching of adult male wild elephants in Orissa

3694. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been large scale poaching of adult male wild elephants in Orissa for ivory trade since 1990;

(b) what steps Government have taken to stop these activities;

(c) the number of adult male wild tuskers of breeding age alive in Orissa at present as per the 1999 census; and

(d) whether the male-female sex ratio of wild elephants has been severely damaged in Orissa?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) Yes, Sir. 103 male elephants have been poached in Orissa since 1990.

(b) The steps taken by the Government to stop these activities are as given below:

(i) Regular patrolling of elephant areas.

(ii) Installation of VHF stations with mobile facility for better communication of protection work.

(iii) Formation of antipoaching mobile squad.

(iv) Installation of antipoaching checkgates at strategic and sensitive points.

(v) Provision of secret funds for collection of intelligence of poachers and their activities.

(vi) Elephant is included in Schedule 1 of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, which provides full protection against hunting & commercial exploitation.

(vii) Trade in elephant ivory has been totally banned to discourage poaching in elephants for its tusk.

(viii) The Asian Elephant is also included in Appendix-1 of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna (CITES) which prohibits International Trade in Asian Ivory.

(ix) Government of India has launched Project Elephant in 1992 to provide impetus to the conservation of wild elephants in India. Under this project assistance is given to 12 states for strengthening their protection and communication infrastructure, development of habitat, prevention & mitigation of man-elephant conflicts etc.

(c) As per recent census (1999) there are 400 adult males in Orissa.

(d) No, Sir. As per 1979 census the sex ratio was Ml: Female 2.5 and as per census 1999 the sex ratio was Ml: Female 2.5.1. This indicates that there is no damage to sex ratio of Male-Female Elephant in Orissa.

Protection of Environment and Forests in Meghalaya

3695. SHRI ONWARD L. NONGTDU: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the amount allocated for protection of environment and forests in Meghalaya in the Ninth Five Year Plan, district-wise;

(b) the measures contemplated to be taken by the Government during the current financial year, to save the forest areas; and

(c) the steps being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) The Ministry of Environment and Forests has allocated an amount of Rs. 440.80 lakhs for protection of environment and forests in Meghalaya in the *Ninth* Five Year Plan. District-wise allocations are not made.

(b) and (c) The Ministry of Environment and Forests is implementing serveral schemes like Integrated Afforestation and Eco Development Project, Area Oriented Fuel-wood Fodder Project and Non Timber Forests Produce to save forest areas in Meghalaya and the same schemes will continue during the current financial year.